

'Cap and trade' would hurt Pa.

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By a razor-thin margin, the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation on June 26 to establish a national cap and trade regime for greenhouse gas emissions. H.R. 2454 passed by a vote of 219-212, with 44 Democrats voting against the measure.

A bipartisan majority of the Pennsylvania U.S. House delegation voted against this ill-conceived plan. This was the case for 28 other states, as well.

In fact, a full 26 percent of the support it obtained for passage in the House came from just two states: California and New York. These two states, long known for big government and big taxes, should not be forcing job-killing legislation on the people of Pennsylvania.

This cap and trade plan will function as a tax on the energy every American uses to go about their daily lives. This plan will be a massive transfer of wealth from consumers to government bureaucrats. It will be a job-killer at a time when we cannot afford to lose any more jobs.

Everything, from making dinner to your morning shower, to commuting to your job, will become more expensive overnight with this plan.

Reducing pollution, cutting greenhouse gas emissions, promoting clean energy, and being more efficient in how we use our energy are important national priorities that we support. However, cap and trade is built on a false premise.

We do not have to hurt people to accomplish our goal. This bill will increase poverty, permanently damage the economy and decrease the standard of living for every American.

As Pennsylvania officials, we must also focus on the specific effects this legislation will have on our state's economy and its consumers.

As a state that is heavily reliant on coal, Pennsylvania will indeed be disproportionately affected by legislation meant to reduce carbon emissions.

It will be difficult for coal plants to reduce emissions because of the need for further technological development in clean coal, carbon capture and sequestration, and other technologies.

Therefore, these plants will be forced to buy offsets and allowances at the outset, which in turn will result in almost immediate rate increases for consumers.

Despite the bill's targets, it will slow temperature increases by merely hundredths of a single de-

gree Fahrenheit by 2050, and no more than two-tenths of a degree by the end of the century, according to a climate modeling study by Chip Knappenberger, of the World Climate Report.

Pennsylvania has already passed laws, such as Act 129, which call for energy efficiency and conservation targets, and the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act, which calls for an 18 percent renewable energy target by 2020.

The federal government should not be running roughshod over states, each of which has its own unique energy resources and challenges. Especially since many, including Pennsylvania, already have plans in place to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The only thing stopping H.R. 2454 from becoming the law of the land is the United States Senate. We urge Pennsylvania's two senators to follow the example of the majority of its House delegation and vote against this job killing energy tax.

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